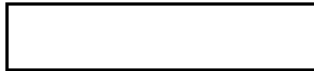


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J. EDWARD JOHNSTON, JR.



19 July 1958

To My Fellow INFORM Subscribers
and Some Other Selected Friends:

The catastrophic failure of U.S. intelligence - or of its transmission or of its interpretation - not just now, but over the years, cannot continue if we are to live as a free nation.

It has long been apparent to me that wrong information or no information is reaching the people and, from the startled protestations of Washington each time international calamity hits us, the White House, State and Defense are little better off than the man in the street. For this reason, some months ago I paid for INFORM subscriptions for every member of the Senate and the House of Representatives. I will now pay for INFORM subscriptions for members of the Cabinet and for the coterie that surrounds the President.


I respectfully request you to read the attached rather long analysis. In it I discuss briefly the Iraqi intelligence fiasco and give examples of some instances where Communist agents were successful in closing vital sources of official information.

At the close of my paper, I make some suggestions and solicit yours.

Sincerely yours,



J. Edward Johnston, Jr.

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BEGINNING OF THE END?

Many of us have shrugged off the loss of China, loss of Indonesia, America's first military defeat in Korea, the cession of much of the Middle East to Communist influence leading to control, and other shocking defeats, as unfortunate but inevitable.

The loss of Iraq somehow shocked the nation more than many preceding disasters. That it has, shows that the instinct of the public is sound. Even the man in the street vaguely senses that it is the beginning of the end.

That it is the beginning of the end is due not so much to loss of territory and the inevitable gravitation of vast strategic areas to the influence (and, later, control) of our implacable enemy, but to an even graver fact. That fact is the additional demonstration that our leaders are working in the dark; they don't know what is going on; not knowing, they fumble in the dark with dynamite.

This situation has to be corrected - and at once - if we are to live as a free nation.

Our leaders apparently have been fed misinformation when they were not denied correct information altogether. I cannot say of my own knowledge that the luxurious Central Intelligence Agency with its vast field staff fails to come up with the vital information that the struggling ISI Foundation publishes in its dynamic report INFORM.

Of my own knowledge I cannot say that, if CIA does secure information, it is misinterpreted in its lush Washington headquarters. I do not know whether some Alger Hiss hidden in the woodwork traps or slants foreign information. Nor can I say of my own knowledge that incompetent analysts give wrong interpretations of information - if, indeed, such information is obtained from official field sources. It would be presumptuous of me to suggest that our leaders are incapable of correct appraisal of foreign information, or, if capable, unable to decide on corrective action.

But one or more of these faults exists.

One or more of these faults must exist: we have seen a President stunned with surprise at the Egyptian seizure of the Suez Canal; we have read that the Administration and the Secretary of State were "taken by surprise" by the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt. And now we read that the "Iraqi revolt stunned not only the White House, but caught the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department unawares". Yet INFORM, a small private intelligence service, had warned of all of the events months before!

I suggest two emergency corrective actions: One, to demand an impartial investigation of Government intelligence services so that blame can be properly placed and - no matter what sweeping changes are indicated - that an aroused, angry public demand they be made. Two, as a help while this is being prepared, that you and your friends join me in seeing that INFORM gets in the hands of your influential friends. I'll conclude this paper with other suggestions and ask for yours.

The Iraqi Rebellion

The public press reported that the Iraqi rebellion "took the White House, the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department unawares". According to seasoned reporters, the confession (or alibi) was made by each of the sources named.

Later, another news source said that Allen Dulles, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, claimed that his organization had been informing the Government right along about the threat of a rebellion in Iraq.

Do you see what this means? If Mr. Allen Dulles is telling the truth, it means that other CIA spokesmen who told reporters that the Iraqi rebellion surprised them, were lying.

If Mr. Allen Dulles is telling the truth, it means that he didn't convey the vital information to his brother, the Secretary of State, or, if he did do so, the Secretary of State did not pass it on - or if he did pass it on, spokesmen of his own Department lied.

If CIA failed to anticipate the Iraqi rebellion, that is the kind of incompetence that, one day, can cost a Government its very existence.

Colonel Amoss, President of the ISI Foundation and Editor of INFORM, has been an observer in thirteen revolutions and has been on the spot in several others. He tells me that it would have been impossible for an intelligence agent of any competence not to have sensed the Iraqi rebellion.

If that is the case, I then suggest that one or more of these conditions must have obtained:

1. There was no CIA agent in Baghdad.
2. There was no CIA agent in contact with anyone in Baghdad, or Moscow, or Warsaw, or Istanbul, or Adana, or Ankara. (INFORM got its early information about the pending coup in Iraq from Moscow, Warsaw and from two sources in London.)

3. If there was a CIA agent, and his reports did not reach Washington then he was: (a) drunk; (b) incompetent; or (c) subversive - or, if not one of these things, the chain of communications was cut by the enemy somewhere along the line.
4. If the information did get to Washington and if it wasn't passed to White House, State and Defense, one of these facts must be true: (a) it was intercepted in CIA; or (b) it was suppressed somewhere along the line; or (c) its meaning was changed or slanted; or it wasn't understood by those who should have understood it.
5. If the material was passed along (without slanting) to the White House, State and Defense, it was: (a) suppressed in each of these Departments; or (b) disbelieved in each of these Departments; or (c) the three departments were impotent to act and/or persons in these departments have lied to the American people.

And, so, we are now risking another Korea - perhaps a global war - all of a sudden - because the White House, State and Defense and, according to some reports, CIA were "taken aback". (I do not question the President's order to invest Lebanon, but I do deplore the fact that prior alertness, which could have averted this world crisis, was not exerted.)

I would not be so exercised if this was but one slip. It is not. It is the culmination of a long series of catastrophes, each one made possible by the failure of information to get into the hands of officials, or, if it did get into such hands, then such officials were incompetent.

Communists have been unable to stop our securing of vital information. Instead, they attempt to discredit the source - and they use stooges to plant information.

Those who have a long history of opposing Soviet aims to engulf free nations are already half-damned. Most of those who strove to block Soviet penetration in our own forces and in those of our allies are sitting on the side lines today. The few whose rugged patriotism compels them to struggle even in a private capacity for the security of the nation are subject to incessant attack - some through the most unexpected sources.

I believe it useful to cite several World War II examples. I do not suggest that the same exact procedure is used today, but similar procedures are. When they are successful, an enemy hidden in our own ranks is indicated.

During World War II, President Roosevelt issued a secret directive to "Give the British anything they ask without question". That gave the Communists a clue. It was to label any senior American officer who stood in their way "anti-British".

General Bonner Fellers, a Trustee of the ISI Foundation, was one of the first to fall under this Communist secret weapon. General Fellers is, perhaps, the greatest living military intelligence officer from the point of view of his record of absolute accuracy and his uncanny ability to call the proper course and result of battles long before they are fought.

As our Military Attache in Cairo, (then) Colonel Fellers had plotted future progress of Rommel's Afrika Corps. But that was not his sin. He protected the Middle East against Communist subversion. The blow fell. He was recalled to Washington because he was "anti-British and persona non grata" with General (now Field Marshal) Wilson. Even as he winged his way home, succeeding battles came out as Colonel Fellers had said they would; Tobruk fell when he said it would and with the loss of prisoners he had forecast.

Colonel Fellers was, of course, exonerated, decorated and promoted - but not permitted to return to the Middle East - because he still bore the label "hot-headed and anti-British", reputedly so designated by General Wilson.

Colonel Amoss (now Editor of INFORM) called on General Wilson and asked if he had demanded General Fellers' recall. General Wilson indignantly denied the charge and said: "Fellers is a loyal ally, the best military intelligence officer in the Middle East. He was the victim of political conspiracy".

Amoss did not choose to take a lesson from General Fellers' experience. He opposed the Anglo-American betrayal of the Yugoslav General Mihailovich. He opposed allied backing of a Moscow-directed group in Greece (which after the war tried to kill Winston Churchill). He was instrumental in putting down a Communist-inspired revolt in the Greek Army brigades in Syria and in stopping a Red revolt in the Greek fleet based on Alexandria.

On Amoss' staff was an American major placed there on the orders of "higher authority" against Amoss' protest. (The Major, after the war, was charged by a Congressional investigating committee as a card-carrying Communist agent.) This officer secretly visited the British director of a secret operations group and charged that his (the Major's) commander (Amoss) was violently anti-British.

With the help of the mis-informed British chief, the major flew to London without leave and made the same charge. Colonel Amoss was then recalled to Washington, faced a Board of Inquiry and was charged with anti-British animus and, because of putting down the Communist rebellion in Greek armed forces, charged with "interfering in the internal affairs of a friendly country". (It is the same charge Moscow and its stooges now level at President Eisenhower.)

The Board exonerated Amoss and praised him. The British made him a Commander of the Order of the British Empire. But Amoss did not return to the Middle East - he was sent to Western Europe. Yugoslavia fell to the Communists and Greece averted Communist occupation only at the cost of more Greek lives than they had lost to the Germans.

This process continues.

I believe Congressional investigative committees have shown ample evidence that good men are shunted about in favor of "softer" ones. Even INFORM and its unpaid staff continually face hidden attacks - and attempts to destroy the effectiveness of the publication and of the individuals.

This situation is intolerable. It is intolerable - not only because good men are blocked - but especially because our leaders appear to be deprived of essential information.

There must be an investigation of our intelligence services and their chain of communications with the White House, State and Defense. The investigation must be carried on by an impartial, competent committee. It might include such people as Harry Anslinger (U.S. Commissioner for Narcotics), General Fellers, General Albert Wedemeyer and, perhaps, by that great patriot, J. Edgar Hoover.

But such a group will never be appointed unless the public is aroused and - with anger - demands it. Members of Congress must be enlisted in the fight for survival; they are the ones who suffer most of all from not getting the information they're entitled to have.

I have these suggestions to make:

1. Communicate as much of this letter to your local newspapers as you see fit.
2. Speak to your friends.
3. Write to your Senators and Congressmen.
4. Speak to groups and luncheon clubs.
5. Join me in sending INFORM to as many influential people as you can.
6. Demand investigative action by every means you can devise.
7. Write me, if you will, of your other suggestions.

There isn't any time to waste; we are in the ultimate fight for our very existence.

J. Edward Johnston, Jr.